

**House Report 109-463 - AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD
AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES
APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2007**

**ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF ROSA L. DELAURO, MAURICE D.
HINCHEY, SAM FARR, ALLEN BOYD, MARCY KAPTUR,
AND DAVID R. OBEY**

The chairman's mark, as presented to the subcommittee, made a number of improvements in the administration's budget request. But the bill became significantly better because of Democratic amendments in subcommittee and full committee:

Rep. DeLauro offered an amendment, passed at subcommittee, to stop an ill-advised Bush administration proposal to allow processed chicken from China to enter the U.S., despite concerns about avian influenza.

The manager's amendment adopted in full committee included an additional increase of \$4 million for the Office of Generics Drugs, as requested by Rep. DeLauro.

Rep. Obey offered an amendment, adopted in full committee, to extend the MILC program through September 30, 2007, instead of arbitrarily cutting it off on August 31, 2007.

Rep. Hinchey offered an amendment, passed in full committee, to strike weak language on conflicts of interest by FDA advisory committee members, and replace it with language passed by the full House last year that would prohibit persons with such conflicts from voting on these panels.

Rep. DeLauro's amendment to give FDA the authority to order drugs from the market if manufacturers refuse to conduct needed safety studies was agreed to in full committee.

These amendments addressed key problems in FDA's operations, provided fair treatment for America's dairy farmers, and helped protect the public health.

But we would also like to make Members aware of our disappointment with the Committee's failure to pass, by a rollcall vote of 24-36, the amendment by Rep. DeLauro to help secure our nation's energy supplies and strengthen our rural communities. The DeLauro amendment was part of a fiscally disciplined, balanced Democratic approach that would return Congressional budgeting to the principle of 'paying-as-you-go,' providing additional funding for key domestic investments and reducing the deficit by scaling back the supersized average tax cut for those making more than \$1 million a year.

The amendment proposed to invest \$500 million in a number of key USDA programs, in order to reenergize our farm economy and communities and jumpstart our country's energy independence efforts.

To promote American energy independence, the amendment: provided funding for the first time ever for the Biorefinery Development Grants program, at \$50 million; restored \$120 million to the Bioenergy Program; funded the Value-Added Agricultural Product Market Development Grant program at its authorized level of \$40 million; provided the first funding for the energy audit program to help farmers and ranchers assess their options for energy conservation and renewable fuel usage; doubled funding for the section 9006 renewable energy/energy efficiency program and the section 9008 biomass R&D program; set aside funds for loans to small businesses in rural areas for improving access to renewable fuel filling stations in rural areas; and provided an increase of \$25 million for our nation's agriculture schools for research on biofuels.

On the rural development side, the DeLauro amendment increased funding for rural water and sewer grants by 44% over the bill; doubled the 2006 level of funding for grants for essential rural community facilities, such as libraries and health clinics; provided a 40% increase in funding in the bill for distance learning and telemedicine grants that help link remote rural communities with remote education institutions and medical experts; and provided a 75% increase in funding for broadband grants to rural communities to give access to modern high-speed telecommunications services. We know these funds would be used immediately--USDA turned away many, many qualified communities that applied for funding under these programs last year because it ran out of money.

The amendment was fully paid for by asking those making more than \$1 million per year to forgo less than \$1,400 of the more than \$114,000 they receive from the Republican tax cut bills. American families are sacrificing enough--it is time this Congress asked the most well-off to do their part meet this challenge, as well. The failure of the Majority to adopt this responsible, fiscally disciplined amendment is particularly ironic given that the next day, the Majority pushed a bill through the House that provides taxpayers with incomes greater than \$1 million per year tax cuts of \$42,000, while families with incomes of \$50,000 a year would only get on average a \$46 tax cut.

Americans are ready to declare their energy independence. And with this amendment, we could have made that possible by tapping the promise our farms hold to reduce our dependence on oil and providing a more secure economic future for our farmers.

Because of the importance of these issues to our nation and our rural communities, we plan to submit the amendment to the Rules Committee and

request that its consideration be made in order when the bill comes before the House.

We look forward to that debate.

Dave Obey.

Maurice Hinchey.

Sam Farr.

Rosa L. DeLauro.

Marcy Kaptur.

F. Allen Boyd, Jr.

